



1994 REPORT ON THE STATUS OF SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AND GIRLS

Prepared by the

**San Francisco
Commission on the Status of Women**

(In Concordance with Ordinance No. 271-89)

June 1, 1994

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City & County of San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

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June 1, 1994

Honorable Frank Jordan, Mayor
200 City Hall
San Francisco, CA 94102

Board of Supervisors
235 City Hall
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mayor Jordan and Supervisors:

On behalf of the Commission on the Status of Women, we are pleased to present the attached report on the status of San Francisco women and girls.

In concordance with Ordinance No. 271-89, this report provides recommendations concerning the feasibility of consolidating the functions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Commission. Both have submitted resolutions endorsing the continued separation of the agencies. In addition, the Human Rights Commission advocates that "it is valuable and necessary that the Commission on the Status of Women remain as a separate, independent City department."

The purpose of the Commission on the Status of Women is to advance women's equality in San Francisco and to assist The City in realizing its policy to ensure women equal economic, political, social and educational opportunities as well as equal services by public agencies. In fulfilling this charge, the Commission has focused its energy on areas of violence, work and poverty, sexual harassment, homelessness, incarceration, and health.

The Commission has analyzed these issues as they pertain to women on the national, state, and local levels so as to paint a picture of the status of the lives of women and girls, and to place our city in context with the rest of the country. As the report illustrates, the picture is not a pretty one. Women and girls continue to be constrained by economic disparity and are faced with gender-specific crises that cross ethnic, age and socio-economic boundaries.

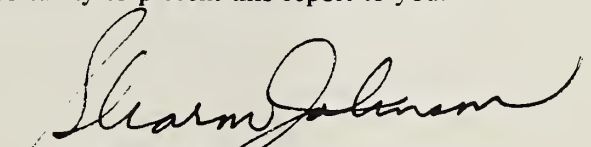
Despite extremely limited resources, and in mind of the seriousness and immediacy of the challenges that women face, the Commission has been a positive and consistent voice for women and girls since its codification as a separate entity in 1989. **The Commission on the Status of Women strongly recommends not only that the Commission remain as a separate city department, but that its authority be strengthened by obtaining equal status with the majority of other departments in San Francisco's governmental structure.** To this end, the Commission has taken the appropriate steps to place an amendment on the November 1994 ballot to provide the citizens of San Francisco the opportunity to vote on whether or not the Commission on the Status of Women shall be made a Charter Commission.

The Commission on the Status of Women requests your support in its effort toward achieving charter status. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to present this report to you.

Sincerely,



Caryl Ito, President



Sharon Johnson, Executive Director



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REPORT ON THE STATUS OF SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AND GIRLS

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REPORT ON THE STATUS OF SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AND GIRLS

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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City & County of San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1994 REPORT ON THE STATUS OF SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AND GIRLS

'You Gain Strength, Courage and Confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do things you think you cannot do.' Eleanor Roosevelt

In 1989, the Mayor of San Francisco and the Board of Supervisors legislatively created an independent Commission on the Status of Women (COSW). The Commission is a dedicated listener and has been the platform for the voices of San Francisco's women. With adequate funding and chartered status, the Commission will continue to ensure that the full rights of San Francisco's women and girls are guaranteed.

This executive summary outlines the 1994 Report on the Status of San Francisco Women and Girls. It pays special attention to domestic violence, women at work, sexual harassment, homelessness, incarceration and health -- with poverty and economic disparity interwoven throughout. Also noted is COSW's current work, the diversity of San Francisco's population, and the many opportunities to develop unique areas of service for the women and girls of our great city. The women of San Francisco, as evidenced by the statistics, require the continued and ever-expanding work of a world-class Commission.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence traumatizes women and children, creating an ongoing cycle. Children who witness domestic violence are five times more likely to become batterers or victims in their adulthood.¹ Battering is the leading single cause of injury to women, greater than auto accidents, rapes and muggings combined.² San Francisco police spend 1/3 of their time responding to domestic violence calls alone;³ the number of calls reported to the SF Police Department has increased 64% in the last decade.⁵ 59% of the female homicides in San Francisco in 1991 involved domestic violence.⁶

* The number of victims seeking help from SF domestic violence agencies is predicted to increase to nearly 25,000 women in 1994.⁴

* 4 out of 5 women needing emergency shelter in SF are turned away.⁷

Preventative efforts of domestic violence services not only reduce the number of women abused and turned out onto the streets; they also decrease the costs of legal fees, crime services and medical assistance. The SF Domestic Violence Consortium estimates that the city saves \$6.4 million dollars annually using domestic violence services over alternatives.⁸ Without the support of COSW, these services would be greatly reduced. COSW's leadership brought about *The Charan Investigation*, a case study which encouraged city departments, service providers, and community advocates to look at the city's response to battered women. City departments are now saving lives by implementing many of the study's 106 recommendations.

WORK AND POVERTY

SAN FRANCISCO LABOR FORCE 1990⁹

Judges	79% male	Administrative support	64% female
Precision production, craft & repair	85% male	Elementary school teachers	70% female
Mechanical engineers	100% male	Registered nurses	87% female

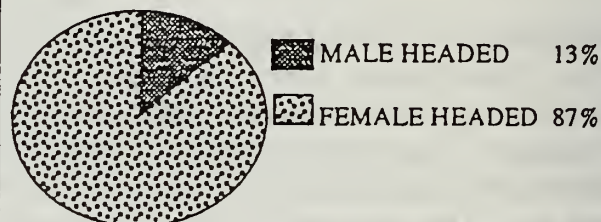
SAN FRANCISCO CIVIL SERVICE 1991¹⁰

Officials and administrators	70% male	Paraprofessionals	66% female
Protective services	83% male	Office and clerical workers	75% female
Skilled craft workers	96% male		

More women are working today, than ever before, making up 45% of San Francisco's total labor force¹¹ and 41% of the city's civil service.¹² However, they still are either over- or underrepresented in many occupations. The concentration of women in low-paying jobs combined with discrimination produces imbalances in status, power and wages. Based on annual earnings in 1992, for every dollar a man made, a woman earned 66 cents.¹³

The situation is bleaker for working mothers. The majority of SF mothers work (69% of the city's mothers with children under 18 are in the workforce)¹⁵ and most single-parent families are headed by women.¹⁶ High city rents, low wages or AFDC payments, and shortages in affordable housing and childcare compound the problem, leaving many single mothers and their children homeless or living in poverty.¹⁷

SF SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES LIVING IN POVERTY¹⁴



COSW assists female city employees with all discrimination claims and documents the costs of discrimination to the city. The office also actively recruits women for traditionally male-dominated fields and maintains a job library open to the public.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment continues to be a serious and costly problem for San Francisco. Sexual harassment complaints by city employees to SF Civil Service Commission have risen 62% since 1988.¹⁸ City agencies reported receiving 113 complaints of sexual harassment in fiscal year 1992-1993; 14 sexual harassment lawsuits were filed against them during the same period.¹⁹

SF COSW instituted a reporting procedure to document sexual harassment claims and their costs to city agencies. The Commission also advises victims, and offers mediation services and sexual harassment prevention training. Under Mayor Jordan's directive, COSW is working with consultants and city agencies to formulate a Sexual Harassment Code of Conduct which will provide guidance and procedures for city employees.

* SF spent over \$600,000 in FY 92-93 on all discrimination complaints (not including lawsuits) filed by female city employees.²⁰

* Since 1987, at least \$1.8 million has been spent on sexual harassment lawsuits filed by city workers. About 12 lawsuits are pending.²¹

* Further losses result from absenteeism, lost productivity and unemployment. Women are 9 times more likely than men to quit jobs because of sexual harassment, 5 times more likely to transfer and 3 times more likely to lose jobs.²²

HOMELESS WOMEN

Homelessness victimizes society's most vulnerable members: the elderly, the disabled, women and children. Homeless women face numerous barriers trying to obtain services. Many women, especially those with limited English skills, have difficulty finding appropriate services. Moreover, current San Francisco programs cannot meet the basic needs of the city's homeless people.²⁵

- 25-30% of SF's homeless are families, most of whom are headed by single women.²³

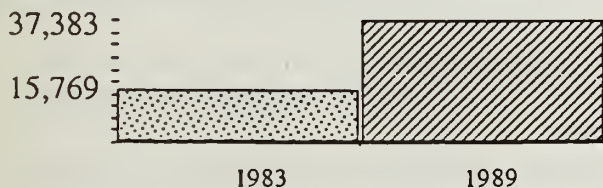
- 29% of SF's homeless indicate their situation was domestic violence-related.²⁴

COSW collaborates with the Department of Social Services to identify emergency beds designated for women who are homeless due to domestic violence. The Commission also worked on a research project which focused on the lack of affordable, transitional and permanent housing for "at-risk" female populations. Developing safe and much needed "second-stage" housing will facilitate the successful transition from homelessness to independent living.

INCARCERATION

Women comprise the fastest growing segment of the prison and jail population.²⁶ San Francisco, in contrast to many urban California cities, has experienced a marked increase in the number of women committed to State and Federal prisons.²⁷ The profile of women in conflict with the law is one of poverty, racism and neglect. These societal factors that draw girls into the judicial system often keep them there as women.

NUMBER OF WOMEN IN BAY AREA JAILS²⁸



- More than 2/3 of the women in jail have children who are under the age of 18.²⁹

- From 1985 to 1990, SF had a 164% increase in the number of women committed to prison for the first time on felony charges.³⁰

COSW's commitment and leadership helped form the Come Into The Sun Coalition (CITSC), comprised of public departments, non-profit service providers, community advocates and system users. CITSC has developed two successful programs to improve the lives of women and girls who find themselves in conflict with the law. The Mentorship Program assists young women at Youth Guidance Center or on probation, and the Street Survival Project aids young women on the streets.

HEALTH

Health and economic status are inseparable; an unexpected illness strains any budget. Women, often under- or uninsured because of job or social status, pay scale and family responsibilities, are particularly vulnerable to health-related financial disasters. They also face service shortages and a disproportionate incidence of chronic disabling diseases.³³

- San Francisco county is first in the state in rate of breast cancer.³¹

- In 1993, the number of newly diagnosed AIDS cases among SF women rose by 272% over 1992.³²

Recognizing the links between health, employment, economic status and homelessness, SF COSW undertook a historic project in conjunction with the Women's Health Advisory Committee to the SF Department of Public Health in 1993. Eighteen focus groups of over 150 SF women met to critique and make recommendations to the city's public health department. The targeted groups included women of different ethnicities, sexual orientations, ages and physical abilities. Incarcerated women and sex workers, historically excluded from health care debates, also participated. The tremendous success of the project is evident not only in feedback from participants and the expected impact on local health care delivery, but also by state, national and international interest in the group's work.

CONCLUSION

San Francisco women continue to be constrained by economic disparity and to face gender-specific crises which cross ethnic, age and socio-economic boundaries. The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women is undaunted by the seriousness and immediacy of the problems. With extremely limited resources, the office publicizes inequities and commits itself to the eradication of violence and discrimination against women. The women and girls of this city need and deserve an active Commission, one that is strong, independent and fully funded.

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6. S.F. Commission on the Status of Women, *San Francisco's Response to Domestic Violence*, Oct. 1993.
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9. U.S. Census 1990.
10. S.F. Civil Service Commission, June 30, 1991.
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33. Newman, Barbara, M.D., *Single-Payer Plan is Better Health Care Reform for Women*, in California Women Lawyers, *National Health Care Reform: The Gender Factor*, Jan. 27, 1994.

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the *1994 Report on the Status of San Francisco Women and Girls* is to comply with Ordinance 271-89, Section 33.8 (b) Report regarding Consolidation of Commissions. Passed by the Board of Supervisors and signed by Mayor Art Agnos in July 1989, the ordinance states that on or before June 1, 1994, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Commission shall submit recommendations, jointly or separately, to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors concerning the feasibility of consolidating the functions of the two Commissions.

It is the understanding of the Commission on the Status of Women (Commission) that the spirit of this legislation was to provide policy makers with the opportunity to evaluate the success of the Commission's separate agency status to determine if it is indeed the most effective way for the Commission to function. To facilitate the Mayor and Board of Supervisors in their task, this report does the following:

- provides information and analysis regarding the status of women and girls in San Francisco, California and the United States;
- reviews select programs and accomplishments of the Commission since its authorization as a separate entity in 1989;
- formally supports the Commission's January 27, 1994, resolution to remain as a separate city department; and
- strongly recommends that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors support the Commission in its efforts to obtain Charter Commission status on the November 1994 ballot.

METHOD

To meet the deadline of June 1, 1994, as established by Ordinance 271-89, the Commission began a concerted effort to collect and analyze data on various issues affecting women. Specific focus was placed on the issues of domestic violence, work and poverty, sexual harassment, homelessness, incarceration and health.

On January 27, 1994, the members of the Commission unanimously passed a resolution entitled "Sustaining Commission on the Status of Women as a Separate City Department"

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(Appendix A). This resolution resolved that the Commission be considered for charter status. At that time, the members of the Commission and its Executive Director initiated a series of meetings with Supervisors, representatives of the Mayor's office, and other officials to provide them with information on the upcoming report and to discuss the Commission.

In March 1994, the Commission provided an Executive Summary outlining the status of San Francisco women and girls to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

In keeping with the tradition of San Francisco's city government to provide members of the public with the opportunity to comment on issues affecting them, the Commission convened a well-publicized public hearing on April 13, 1994, to discuss support for the Commission. Appendix D includes a list of people who have publicly expressed their support.

To illustrate the extent of its services, and thus show how it positively impacts the women and girls of San Francisco, the Commission resolved to review its accomplishments that are specifically related to the six critical areas analyzed for this report. This assessment provided evidence of the successful functioning of the Commission since its establishment as a separate department. It also provided further evidence for the Commission that the power, authority, and public mandate that charter status brings will enhance the Commission's ability to achieve its goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The following provides information and analysis on the selected areas of study: domestic violence, work and poverty, sexual harassment, homelessness, incarceration, and health. Its purpose is to conceptualize the status of women in the context of national, state and city environments. It is not presented as a definitive analysis of all issues affecting women, but rather a broad overview of how San Francisco compares to California and the nation in general. When appropriate, activities of the Commission are highlighted. A comprehensive list of Commission endeavors is thoroughly explored in the *Programs and Accomplishments* section of this report.

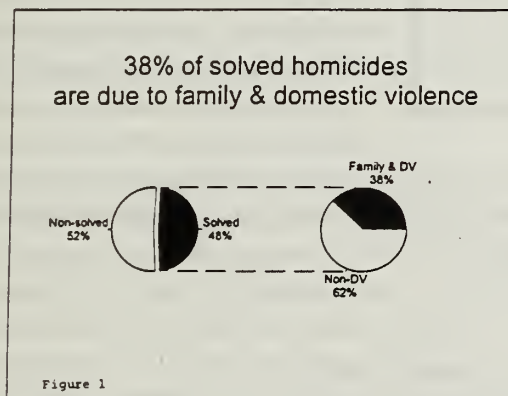
Domestic Violence

An eight sentence story in the April 15, 1994, *San Francisco Examiner* began "A 51-year old man has been arrested for suspicion of beating his estranged wife to death in her Mission District apartment earlier this week." The report goes on to say that Florinda Martinez Mejia was bludgeoned to death with a crowbar by a husband who had a history of abusing her.¹

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On the first page of the same paper, the headline reads "Stalking victim's nightmare." Fortunately the story does not conclude with another woman's death, but it does chronicle the stalking of Nicole Abagnaro, who fled the Bay Area to escape an abusive boyfriend. Despite overwhelming evidence of harassment, one of the San Francisco civil attorneys assigned to the case characterized it as "a boyfriend-girlfriend thing that just got weird," a statement that indicates the need for sensitivity training about domestic violence for law enforcement officials at all levels.²

In the United States, approximately six million women are battered each year.³ Twenty-one percent of all women who use hospital emergency surgical services are battered,⁴ yet some of the nation's largest insurance companies routinely deny insurance coverage to women who have been beaten by their husbands.⁵ The American Medical Association and the U.S. Surgeon General have recognized battering by an intimate partner as the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15-44.⁶ Domestic violence knows no boundaries -- it does not matter if you are rich or poor, black or white, gay or straight, young or old. The girls and boys who witness violence in their homes often grow up to be abused and abusers themselves.



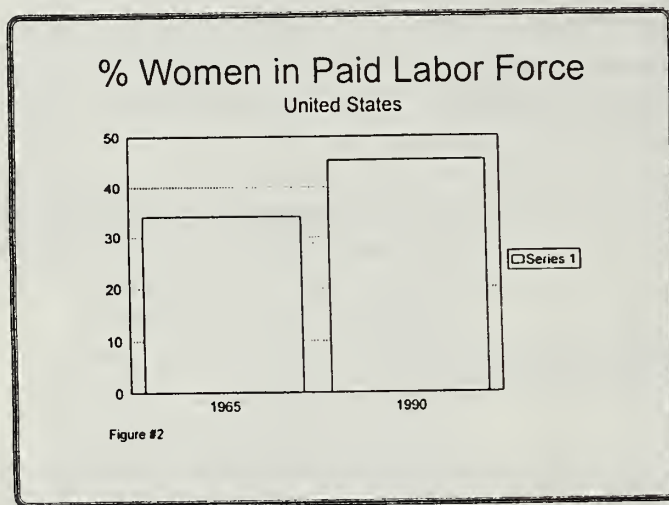
In 1992, California law enforcement agencies received 248,828 domestic violence calls; 70% involved weapons.⁷ Last year, the San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium assisted over 31,000 women and children seeking emergency domestic violence intervention services.⁸ One-third of the San Francisco Police Department's time was spent responding to domestic violence calls;⁹ almost 40% of the solved homicide cases in San Francisco in 1991 and 1992 involved domestic violence disputes (Figure #1),¹⁰ and

64% of female homicides were victims of domestic violence.¹¹ Also, the San Francisco Rape Treatment Center reported increases not only in the numbers of women who had been battered, but also those *held hostage*.¹²

The domestic violence epidemic has not gone unnoticed by lawmakers at the national level. Congress is currently considering the Violence Against Women Act, legislation that authorizes \$1.8 billion for reforms to make streets and homes safer for women.¹³ In 1993, California's

Senate and Assembly enacted a combined total of 25 bills addressing violence against women.¹⁴ In San Francisco, the Commission on the Status of Women was instrumental in developing a domestic violence training program for police officers, which was instituted as a direct result of the high incidence of homicides stemming from domestic disputes.¹⁵ In addition, the city's General Fund continues to support the agencies of the San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium in their efforts to respond to the crisis. WOMAN, Inc., one of the Consortium's participating agencies, offers one of the few lesbian domestic violence services programs in the nation.

Work and Poverty



There have been many demographic changes in the structure of the U.S. work force since the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, not the least of which is the ever increasing number of women in the paid labor force (Figure #2).¹⁶ However, they continue to be over represented in low paying occupations and under represented in high paying ones. For example, while women constitute approximately 57% of the federal work force¹⁷ and almost 50% of white collar positions, they are only 10% of the Senior Executive Service.¹⁸

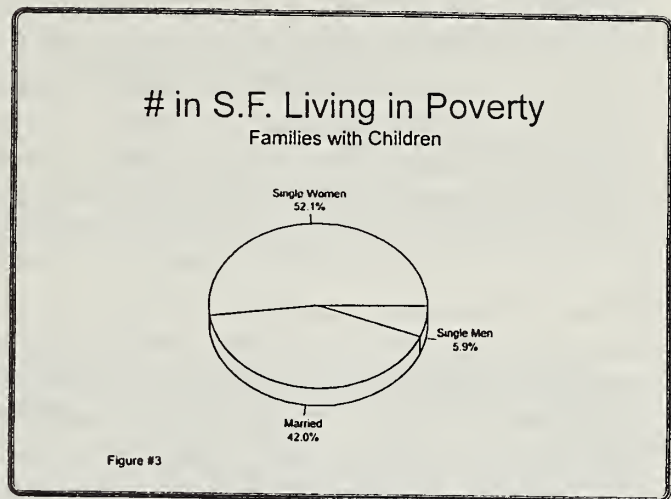
Not surprisingly, minorities appear to face even greater obstacles. In its well-publicized study of Fortune 1000 companies, the Department of Labor found that employees in "management" positions constituted only 16.9% women and 6.0% minorities.¹⁹ The concentration of women and minorities in low paying jobs -- combined with discrimination -- produces profound imbalances in status, power and wages.

Women made up about half of San Francisco's population in 1990, with 61% of them in the paid labor force.²⁰ Unfortunately, the fact that many are working does not exempt women from poverty. In San Francisco, 52% of all families living at or under the poverty level (\$12,674 for four people) were headed by single mothers (Figure #3).²¹ Sixty-five percent of mothers with children under age six and 74% of mothers with children from 6 to 17 years old work.²² Poor working moms with children under the age of five pay 23.2% of their income

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for childcare; non-poor working mothers pay only 8.7%.²³

1994 is certain to bring congressional action on the Economic Equity Act, which addresses a broad range of issues affecting women in the workplace.²⁴ The recently approved Family and Medical Leave Act likely will prove to be beneficial for many women, men and families. At the city level, the Commission advocated for passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, and worked with San Francisco Civil Service to develop an internal policy that includes domestic partnership, a policy that is not found in the federal version.



On the state level, grass roots efforts have been successful in slowing down the Wilson administration's attempts to reduce welfare benefits and other services that are utilized predominantly by women and children. Also, a statewide lending program co-sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco is being started specifically to assist minority- and female-owned firms and community-based organizations.²⁵

In San Francisco, city departments are considering privatizing public services, which predominantly will affect jobs held by women and minorities.²⁶ On a more positive note, the city was ranked one of the top ten best U.S. cities for entrepreneurial women by *Working Woman* magazine. San Francisco boasts of 19,894 women business owners, constituting 33% of all firms and \$1.9 billion in gross revenues.²⁷

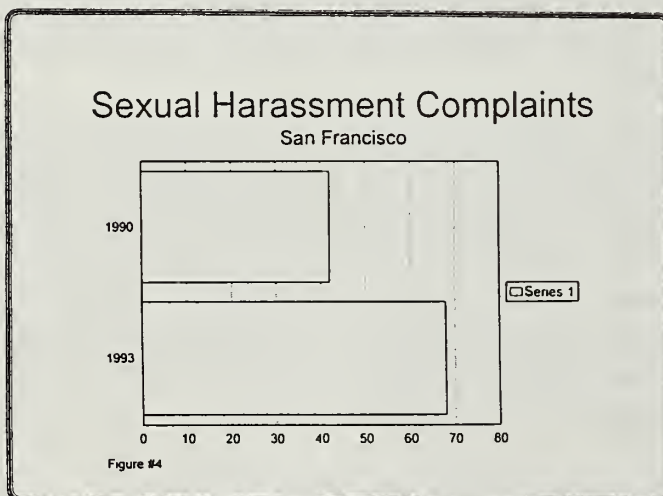
In the U.S. today, one's earning potential is drastically affected by educational attainment, and low educational attainment is directly affected by poverty. Unfortunately California's high school drop out rate hovers at 30%, with girls suffering severe consequences in the form of future economic disparity.²⁸ There are many programs in San Francisco that are geared towards keeping girls in school and interested in education. San Francisco's own Girls After School Academy (GASA) was featured as an exemplary program in the May/June 1994 issue of *MS. Magazine*.²⁹ Girls participate on the committees of the Commission, an example of the agency's commitment to providing a voice for young women.

Sexual Harassment

The Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings in 1991 focused national attention on sexual harassment. The Navy's Tailhook scandal followed shortly thereafter, calling even more attention to the seriousness of the problem. Sexual harassment affects an estimated 85% of American working women at some point in their lives.³⁰ Complaints reported to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission more than doubled between 1988 and 1993, with almost 10% of the 1993 national total from Californians.³¹

In May 1994 serious incidents of harassment were reported at two well-regarded California campuses, University of California-Santa Cruz³² and Stanford.³³ Unfortunately, harassment of women at institutes of higher education is nothing new. When women entered the University of Rochester in 1913, "male students responded by stamping their feet when a woman entered a classroom, physically blocking classroom doors, and mocking and jeering women whenever they appeared on campus."³⁴ In some places, little has changed. In 1994, the first woman to attend the Citadel in South Carolina has been hissed at, had obscenities yelled at her and was called derogatory names in a school newspaper.³⁵ Harassment is not restricted to colleges; according to a study conducted by the American Association of University Women, harassment starts for girls as early as elementary school.³⁶

Sexual harassment has far-reaching effects. It costs a typical Fortune 500 company \$6.7 million per year in absenteeism, employee turnover, low morale and lost productivity.³⁷ Over the past eight years in San Francisco, at least \$1.8 million have been spent on sexual harassment lawsuits filed by city workers.³⁸ An additional \$600,000 was spent on discrimination complaints filed by female city employees.³⁹



In California, the number of sexual harassment complaints filed with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing also doubled between fiscal years 1988-89 and 1992-93.⁴⁰ In addition, the rate of sexual harassment as a percentage of all discrimination cases filed with California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing has risen steadily over the past decade.⁴¹

San Francisco Civil Service Commission reports indicate that sexual harassment complaints by city

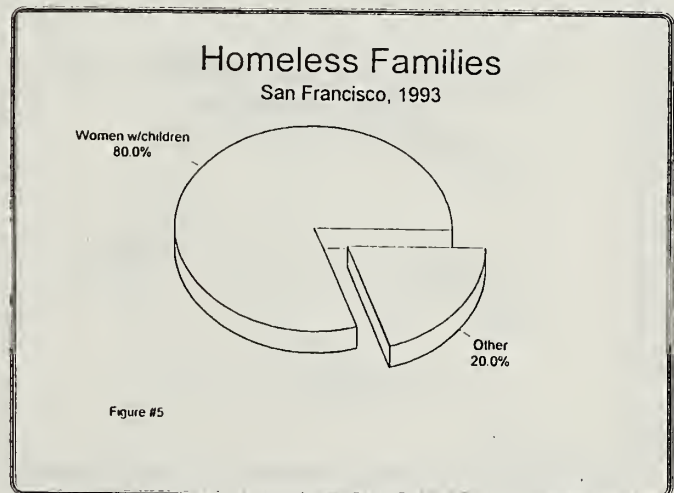
employees have risen 62% since 1983 (Figure #4).⁴² One hundred thirteen sexual harassment complaints were made by city and county employees in fiscal year 1992-93, and 14 sexual harassment lawsuits were reported.⁴³ In 1993, the Commission received approximately 300 phone calls from women asking for information about sexual harassment.⁴⁴

Last year the Supreme Court passed down a ruling making cases of sexual harassment easier to prove, an opinion that was widely received as a step forward for women.⁴⁵ In 1992, the Supreme Court ruled that students who are victims of sexual harassment, abuse or assault in schools or colleges have a right to collect monetary damages, another victory for women and girls.⁴⁶

In January 1994, the San Francisco Police Commission unanimously adopted guidelines prohibiting discrimination and sexual harassment; the Commission on the Status of Women was a key player in writing the new policy. As requested by Mayor Jordan, in July 1994 the Commission will present a study on sexual harassment that will, among other things, include recommendations for a "code of conduct" to provide guidance and procedures for city employees regarding issues of sexual harassment.

Homeless Women

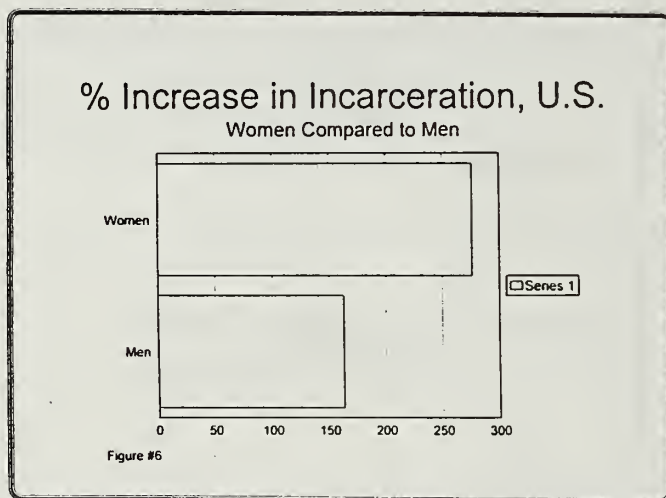
Homelessness is an ongoing problem in cities across the U.S., with families the fastest growing sector. The number of single mothers with children doubled from 1970 to 1988.⁴⁷ Women, children, the elderly and disabled are especially victimized. Seventeen percent of the total homeless population are estimated to be seniors.⁴⁸ Twenty-one percent of those living on the streets are victims of domestic violence; in San Francisco this number is estimated at 30% despite efforts by the Commission and the Department of Social Services to designate space for women who are escaping violent partners.⁴⁹ In 1991-1992, there was a minimum of 14,372 homeless families in the Bay Area, with single female-headed households representing the majority (Figure #5).⁵⁰



Homeless women face considerable barriers in obtaining services and in surviving on the street. In 1986, almost one million battered women and their children needed emergency shelter, but only a third found space.⁵¹ Today, San Francisco shelters turn away four out of five women seeking haven.⁵² In California and San Francisco, where many people speak primary languages other than English, the difficulty in locating services is especially burdensome. While all people who find themselves homeless are effected psychologically, emotionally, and socially, women are especially vulnerable to assault, robbery, rape, and poor health. Mothers must care for their children in the most difficult of circumstances and are in constant fear of having them taken away.

In California, where unemployment is the highest among the 11 major industrial states,⁵³ homelessness is not likely to disappear. The Department of Social Services reported 12,644 AFDC recipients in 1993; only 2,193 of them were provided with public housing.⁵⁴ In San Francisco, there have been up to 1,000 families on waiting lists for subsidized housing.⁵⁵ Although San Francisco has attempted to address the matter, it is evident that current programs do not meet basic needs of people in our city.

Incarceration



Women comprise the fastest growing segment of the prison and jail population in the U.S. (Figure #6).⁵⁶ Drugs, mandatory minimum sentences and new sentencing guidelines are the root of the increase.⁵⁷ Of the 600,000 women in prison in 1991, 73% had non-violent drug offenses.⁵⁸ Young girls comprise 17% of offenders.⁵⁹

The rise in the number of women behind bars has critical implications in terms of children. 76% of women prisoners in 1986 were mothers; four out of five had children under the

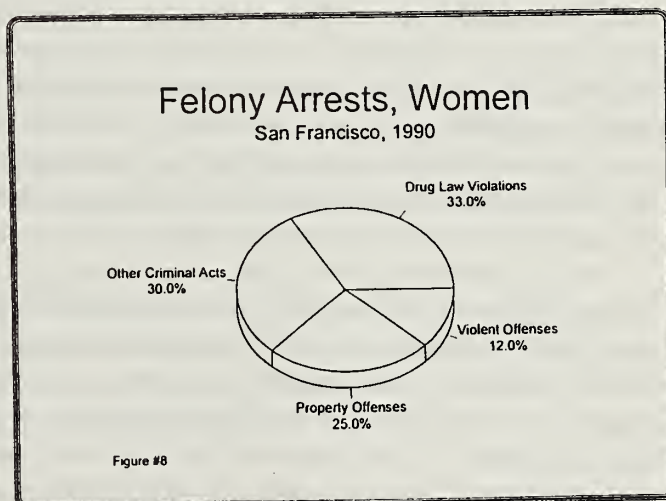
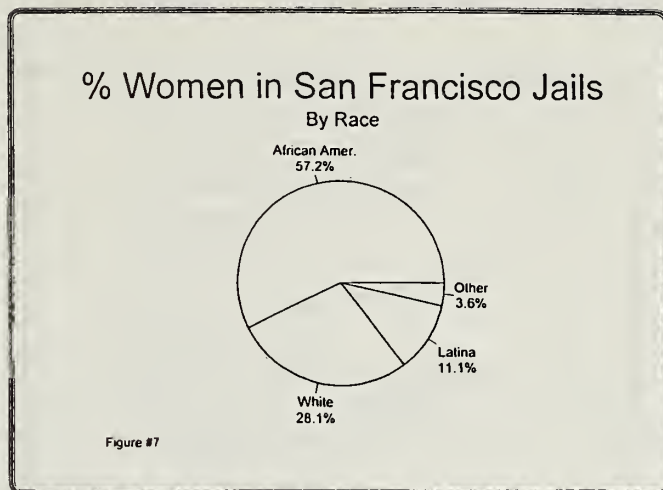
age of 18.⁶⁰ According to the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, on any given day in 1991 there were 167,000 children in the U.S. who had mothers in prison.⁶¹ Fifty-four percent of children never visit their mothers while they are incarcerated, causing them immeasurable trauma and psychological suffering.⁶²

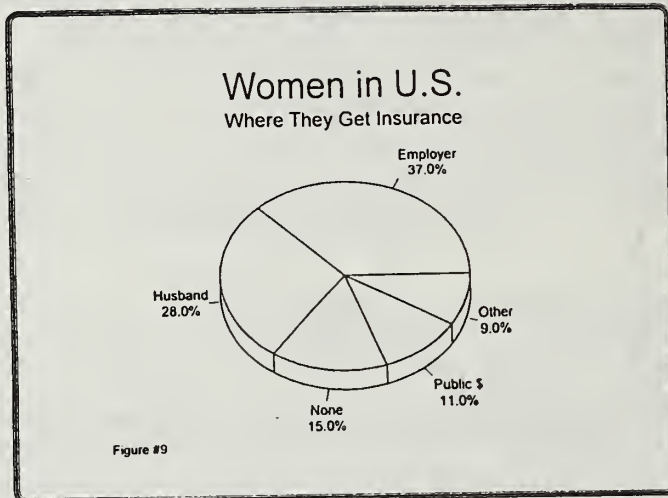
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The profile of women in conflict with the law is one of poverty, racism and neglect. The societal factors that draw girls into the judicial system often keep them there as women. Who are the women in San Francisco's jails? They are predominantly African-American, White, and Latina/Hispanic (Figure #7). The average age for women is 30, but inmates range in age from 18 to 64 years old.⁶³ (Figure #8)⁶⁴ Most have very little education. Many are mothers; 16% of *girls* in prison have children of their own, and most do not have legal custody of them.

Approximately 66% used drugs between the ages of 12 and 15.⁶⁵ They are three times more likely than a male inmate to be physically or sexually abused.⁶⁶

In general, the criminal justice system is not set up to deal with women's concerns, such as child care and separation from their children, lack of education, physical and sexual abuse, lack of health care, and substance abuse. Aware of the overwhelming increase in the number of women and girls in the prison system, San Francisco's Commission on the Status of Women helped form the *Come Into The Sun Coalition* (CITSC), a collaborative effort among nearly 40 public, private and non-profit service providers to address the needs of incarcerated girls and women, with special attention to preventative measures aimed at keeping women out of the criminal justice system.



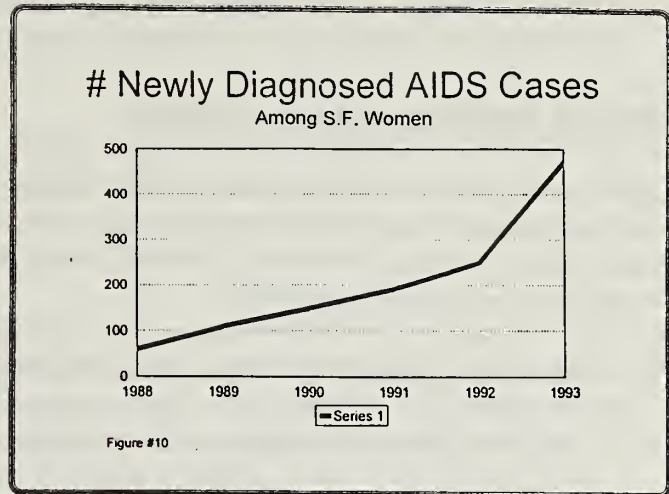
Health

What Anita Hill unintentionally did to revolutionize the nation's conscience about sexual harassment, the Clinton administration purposely has attempted to do for health care. Since Bill Clinton assumed the presidency in January 1993, it is a rare newspaper or newsprogram that does not feature a segment on some aspect of health care. Estimates range from 30-40 million people in the U.S. without health coverage. For most, health coverage is tied to employment; for others, poverty.

There are an estimated 12 million women (15%) in the United States without any health care whatsoever.⁶⁷ Many are under 30 years old and in their childbearing years.⁶⁸ In 1990, 5.8 million Californians were estimated to be uninsured. Nearly 80% were found to be working parents and their children.⁶⁹ Thirty-three percent of children in San Francisco are estimated to be without health insurance.⁷⁰ Women, who are often under- or uninsured because of job or social status, pay scale, and family responsibilities, are particularly vulnerable to health-related financial disasters. They also face service shortages and a disproportionate incidence of chronic disabling diseases. While more women than men have health insurance, they are more vulnerable to losing it through divorce, widowhood, or job loss of spouse (Figure #9).⁷¹

If passed, how will President Clinton's Health Security Act impact women? *MS. Magazine* says that its promises of universal coverage, pregnancy-related services, family planning, mental health benefits, and the expanded use of health professionals from women-dominated fields such as nursing are positive components of the plan. However, there would be some harmful effects. Undocumented residents will lose coverage; required co-payments and deductibles will disproportionately affect women, since they are the lowest paid group in the workforce and the most likely to work part-time; current Medicaid recipients may lose access to health services; and the timetable for implementation is much too long to aid those who have critical needs right now.⁷² The Women's Health Equity Act, also national legislation, is designed to improve women's health research and services. Portions of it have been approved by Congress and are awaiting the president's signature.⁷³

The Commission is especially concerned about two deadly diseases that are on the rise: breast cancer and AIDS. San Francisco county is first in the state in the mortality rate from breast cancer for black and white (non-Hispanic) women.⁷⁴ With an estimated one in eight women being diagnosed nationally each year, as well as revelations about questionable research practice in several major breast cancer studies,⁷⁵ women must become more involved in the need for research, care, and prevention. AIDS too is on the rise: the number of newly diagnosed cases among San Francisco women rose over 250% between 1988 and 1993 (Figure # 10).⁷⁶ In the U.S., there are 43,999 reported AIDS cases whom are adult women,⁷⁷ and it is estimated that AIDS in adolescent girls worldwide is rising more swiftly than among adults.⁷⁸ Chronic fatigue syndrome, while not deadly, is another debilitating disease that affects women in particular and has been on the rise in recent years.⁷⁹



A recent article in the *San Francisco Examiner* quoted the executive director of the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights as saying, "The degree of discrimination directed at gay and lesbian physicians and patients alike is nothing less than shocking." He was responding to the findings of a survey of lesbian, gay and bisexual doctors and medical students of whom 67% reported they knew of patients who had been denied or received substandard care because they were lesbian, gay or bisexual; 88% had heard other doctors make disparaging remarks about gay and lesbian patients; and one even said "ob-gyns here don't do pap smears on a lot of their openly lesbian patients."⁸⁰ Despite these and other startling statistics about women's well-being, only 13% of the National Institutes of Health annual budget goes toward research related to women's health.⁸¹

Aware of the need to address women's health care concerns at the local level, the Commission and the Women's Health Advisory Committee to the San Francisco Department of Public Health convened nearly 250 San Francisco women to discuss their health issues and provide recommendations to the city's public health department. *Restructuring Health Care Delivery: "Woman-Centered Health Services"* was presented in April 1994 and was well received by the Public Health Department and the San Francisco Health Commission. Also, the Commission on the Status of Women unanimously passed a resolution in support of the recommendations of the report.

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DESCRIPTION OF COMMISSION

Mission, Objectives, and Responsibilities

The Commission is a city and county agency whose purpose is to advance women's equality in San Francisco and to assist the city and county of San Francisco in realizing its policy to ensure women's equal economic, political, social and educational opportunities as well as equal services by public agencies.

To achieve its purpose, the Commission has defined the following primary objectives:

- to provide technical assistance to city departments;
- to educate and train public and private sectors on gender-based discrimination with emphasis on sexual harassment;
- to work with the Civil Service Commission on monitoring discrimination claims filed by women;
- to administer domestic violence funds; and
- to advance women's equality in San Francisco through advising and recommending to city agencies on the recruitment of qualified women to serve in city positions.

The Commission is responsible for the following:

- to foster the advancement of the status of women, particularly those issues that impact women of color, battered women, incarcerated women and girls, homeless women and low income women, both within city and county government and in the private sector;
- to advocate and propose legislation to improve the quality of women's lives;
- to promote programs that increase public awareness and understanding of domestic violence, and to administer funds for the provision of emergency shelter and services to battered women and their children;
- to monitor complaints of unlawful and unequal treatment of women and to investigate inequalities and propose remedies, as well as to promote public education on and awareness of prevention of sexual harassment and other job discrimination of women;

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- to provide technical assistance, information and referrals related to women and young women's rights and services to individuals, community organizations, businesses and government; and
- to maintain an updated job resource library located at the commission office that is free to the public during business hours.

Commission and Staff Structure

The Commission consists of seven commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor. They meet monthly to discuss matters of policy, business, official correspondence, committee reports and matters of community interest brought to the commissioners. All meetings are open to the public, and public comment is welcome. The commission operates via three standing committees on community relations, domestic violence, and employment. Other committees are established as needed.

Commission staff currently is comprised of four full-time employees including one executive director, one executive secretary, a special representative focusing on domestic violence, and another special representative for economic and employment issues. The Commission relies heavily on volunteers for an array of general office and computer skills. In addition, the Commission coordinates the activities of *Project 20* participants who work at the agency to fulfill community service requirements. A structured, staff-supervised internship program has provided the Commission with talented students who are committed to the agency's mission to improve the status of women and girls in San Francisco. The success of the intern program has contributed to the Commission's ability to tackle new challenges and expand its workload.

Authority and Budget

It is the policy of the city and county of San Francisco that the Mayor, the Chief Administrative Officer and all city and county commissions, boards, and department heads consult with the Commission on matters relating to women. The Commission reports directly to the Mayor and is responsible for its own budget. Fiscal Year 1994-95 budget totals \$1,375,300 (approximately \$1,059,300 for domestic violence services and \$316,000 for operating expenses.)

PROGRAMS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women serves many purposes. The fact that it was added to the Administrative Code in 1989 was a strong indication of the city's

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commitment to women and girls. Through the work that it has done over the past five years, the Commission has established itself as a reliable institution in the community while balancing its role as an official government agency. It has served thousands of people and is regarded as a source of information, advice and expertise on women's issues.

The Commission believes that tradition and prejudice often contribute to less than desirable circumstances for women, and that the presence of an official agency committed to women's concerns in the community assists in changing negative myths. Recognizing that gender is only one of many factors that affect women, the Commission is particularly thoughtful of those issues that impact women of color, as well as women who are homeless, impoverished, battered or incarcerated.

While the Commission's work concentrates on numerous issues of concern to women, this report has paid special attention to six critical issues: domestic violence, work and poverty, sexual harassment, homelessness, incarceration and health. The following provides documentation of the ways the Commission addresses each.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Consortium

The Commission coordinates the services of the San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium. The Commission prepares and monitors contracts, facilitates agencies in achieving city and county approval, distributes monies (from general fund and marriage license fees), and participates in Consortium meetings.

The Commission served as a liaison between Liz Claiborne, Inc. and the Mayor's Office during the 1992 public education campaign regarding domestic violence, *Celebrating Public/Private Partnership to End Domestic Violence*. This successful campaign resulted in national exposure for San Francisco's Domestic Violence Consortium as well as an ongoing relationship with Liz Claiborne, Inc. To date, over \$30,000 has been raised to support domestic violence services in our city as a direct result of this very successful public education campaign.

San Francisco's Domestic Violence Consortium is a unique collaborative effort on the part of thirteen agencies that specialize in emergency domestic violence services in the city. The Commission's participation serves as a valuable link between the city and the needs of the women who live (and die) in its communities as a result of violence in the home.

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The Commission has documented substantial cost savings to the city as a result of the coordinated services of the domestic violence community. The following examples reveal these savings:

- \$40 per night is the average cost of shelter and services for a battered woman and her child at a domestic violence shelter. The cost in a homeless shelter, plus two hours of counseling and child care services, is \$180 per night. At approximately 34,675 bed nights per year, annual savings to the city: \$4,854,500.
- The average cost to provide 24-hour crisis line services through the Consortium is \$8 per call. The same service through San Francisco General Hospital is \$22, almost three times as much. At an estimated 15,000 calls per year, annual savings to the city: \$210,000.
- Legal representation and advocacy for battered women through Consortium programs costs \$20 per hour. City-contracted private attorneys would cost a minimum of \$125 per hour. At 27,000 hours of legal services to battered women each year, annual savings to the city: \$2,843,100.
- Crisis intervention and counseling through Consortium programs cost \$26 per hour. That same hour at a community mental health center costs \$68 per hour. At 2,200 hours of counseling per year, annual savings to the city: \$92,400.

The Charan Investigation Report and the 1991-1992 Homicide Study

The devastating murder of Veena Charan in 1990 led the Commission to an examination of a city-wide response to domestic violence. The *Charan Investigation Report* documented the dangerous prevalence of domestic violence in our city and proposed recommendations to improve the city's response to the problem. Recommendations from the report have been implemented by key law enforcement agencies. However, much more needs to be done.

As a follow up to the *Charan Investigation Report*, the Commission has worked in conjunction with the Family Violence Prevention Fund and the San Francisco Police Department to publish *A Study of Family and Domestic Violence Homicide Cases in San Francisco*. The study found that at 38%, domestic violence homicides were the largest category of all homicides in San Francisco. Additionally, 68% of all solved female homicides were due to family violence. The fact that the majority of domestic violence-related homicide cases were preventable was the most alarming finding of the study.

The *Homicide Study* was presented to the Board of Supervisors and the Health, Public Safety and Environment Committee at a public hearing on April 12, 1994. Its findings and

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recommendations currently are being reviewed by both groups for implementation in the future. Efforts to establish a city-wide response to domestic violence continues to be a priority for the Commission.

Domestic Violence Awareness Trainings

One of the recommendations of the *Charan Investigation Report* was the need for the San Francisco Police Department and other city departments to be trained and sensitized to handle domestic violence cases. To this end, the Commission developed a certified training program that it has presented to the police, adult probation, and public health departments, as well as to graduate schools and universities and other community agencies. Because incidents of domestic violence continue to rise, and due to the success of the trainings, the Commission anticipates an increase in requests for the training program in the future.

In addition to the trainings, the Commission published *Domestic Violence Hurts Everyone* and *Sexual Assault: It Can Happen to Anyone*, two brochures that address violence against women.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Along with the rest of the nation, San Francisco observes Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Every October, the Commission presents an educational exhibit in City Hall to increase public awareness of the seriousness and pervasiveness of domestic violence and its long-term effects on society. Over the past five years, themes have included "Missing Pieces Lasting Solutions" (1993), "United Against Domestic Violence: Celebrating Public/Private Partnership Against Domestic Violence" (1992), "Save Our Children -- Stop the Cycle of Violence" (1991), and "In Remembrance of Battered Women" (1990). In 1989, the Commission contributed to the memory of women who were murdered by a woman-hating gunman in Montreal, Canada.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month provides the Commission an opportunity to collaborate with other organizations around the issue of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Consortium, Liz Claiborne, Inc., San Francisco National Organization for Women, San Francisco Police Department, and the Family Violence Prevention Fund are just a few of the agencies that have worked with the Commission to develop awareness about this issue.

Study on Chemical Abuse/Dependency and Battered Women

The Commission has been concerned with the apparent relationship between chemical dependency/abuse and battered women. In June 1994, the Commission will release the findings of a study that show strong evidence of a positive relationship between women who

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are dependent on drugs and experience of domestic violence, child abuse and/or incest. A forum for substance abuse treatment providers and domestic violence service providers is being planned to discuss this issue and to explore ways to join efforts to improve services to this group of women.

Work and Poverty

How to Get that Appointment Workshop and Brochure

On July 21, 1993, the Commission and the National Women's Political Caucus jointly hosted "How To Get That Appointment," a workshop on how women can become involved with the governmental process. The corresponding booklet, *Within Your Reach: How to Get That Appointment*, contains useful information on resume writing, interviewing, and networking. Approximately 500 copies have been distributed.

Another Commission publication, *Breaking Through: Successful Strategies for Alternative Work*, is a guide that describes information on how women can access greater employment opportunities through promotions, job training or lateral transfers within San Francisco.

Job Library

Used by approximately 900 people each year, the Commission's job library is a comprehensive listing of available positions in the public, private and non-profit sectors throughout the Bay Area, as well as educational resources and current events. The Commission continuously recruits companies to take part in the job library. Currently, there are roughly 200 participating organizations.

Preventing Workplace Discrimination

The Commission has designed many programs aimed at preventing workplace discrimination, eliminating barriers to advancement, and improving retention of women who work for the city. It assists city departments, labor unions, non-profit agencies and private businesses identify problems that female employees face, and provides technical support on how to implement creative solutions. The Commission has designed many training programs. One program, on how to sensitively handle sexual harassment, has helped to reduce the city's potential liability and number of lawsuits. Approximately 30 trainings are provided annually.

The Commission is available to mediate discrimination complaints and to provide technical assistance. Working with the Commission, the San Francisco Police Department successfully developed a strong, internal policy against sexual harassment and discrimination, including a

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detailed process for investigating and disciplining cases. The Department of Public Works utilized the expertise of the Commission to design an internal program to retain women in non-traditional positions. *Voices and Choices*, an outgrowth of the link with Public Works, is a program that was developed by the city's Management Development Department to assist women in upward mobility and job skills. The Commission assisted the department in setting up the program, and it has been successfully running on its own for the past four years.

In addition to these programs and trainings, the Commission monitors data on monthly discrimination complaints filed by women from every city department in order to identify patterns and eradicate problems.

Mission Bay Development

In 1990, when it was announced that Cattellus Corporation was planning to begin extensive construction work on the Mission Bay Project, the Commission recognized a valuable opportunity for increasing job opportunities for women in non-traditional employment. The Commission took the initiative to negotiate with this private corporation on behalf of female construction workers in the city. As a result, the Commission was instrumental in raising apprenticeship goals for women up to 23%, providing significant future job opportunities for women. According to the Little Hoover Commission (a state regulatory agency for which the Commission has provided testimony), only 8% of the 362 businesses with apprenticeship programs in California have met their goals of having 20% to 25% women.⁸²

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment

In October 1991 at the request of Supervisor Roberta Achtenberg, the Board of Supervisors heard six hours worth of testimony from over 50 women about the sexual harassment they had experienced. As a result, the Board of Supervisors mandated that all city departments provide the Commission with monthly reports on sexual harassment complaints filed by city employees. The Commission tracks the reports, identifies problematic patterns and practices, and assists departments to provide solutions. The Commission receives five to ten telephone calls per week from women seeking assistance on how to handle sexual harassment and other discrimination-related problems. Counseling is provided to civil service employees, but lack of human and financial resources forces the Commission to refer many non-city workers to other sources for help.

This summer the Commission plans to present a report that takes a comprehensive look at sexual harassment in San Francisco civil service and how the city can more effectively handle

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this issue. Preliminary findings indicate that many women employed by the city feel the abuse and retaliation they received after filing an internal complaint was often more harmful than the actual harassment. The report will include a sample framework for a city-wide code of conduct to address sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

Working in conjunction with the City Attorney, the Commission designed a four-hour training program on how to sensitively and effectively arbitrate sexual harassment cases. Ten trainings have been completed and have been very well received by the human resources employees and department heads who attended (245 participants in 1993). The training focuses on the legal aspects of sexual harassment, how to investigate complaints, sensitivity training, and how to manage arbitration. Due to the success of past trainings, as well as the numerous requests for more of them, the Commission anticipates that more will be planned in the future.

Monitoring City Contracts/Affirmative Action Plans

Every San Francisco city department is legally responsible for developing an affirmative action plan to help achieve a workforce reflective of the diversity of San Francisco's population. For five years, the Commission has been responsible for monitoring the effective implementation of these affirmative action plans for the city's 75 departments. The Commission is available for consultation or assistance as requested.

Homeless Women

Low Income Housing Project

The Commission is painfully aware that insufficient housing continues to plague San Francisco, and it is actively committed to developing new approaches and partnerships to address the lack of safe, affordable housing for women and their children.

Since 1990, the Commission has worked with human service professionals to discuss mutual concerns about the lack of safe, affordable, transitional housing for several "at risk" populations of women and children. Representatives of this consortium of community organizations and public agencies are concerned about the need for "second stage" housing and have considered a range of options to address the problem.

The Commission also is affiliated with the Low Income Housing Fund (LIHF), a housing development corporation. LIHF works with the YWCA, Mary Elizabeth Inn, Coalition on

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Homelessness, Mission Housing Development Corp., FACE, Family Violence Prevention Fund, Asian Women's Shelter, Sedway and Associates, the Mayor's Office of Housing and the Mayor's Office of Community Development. These organizations have been working together to develop alternative permanent housing packages for homeless, battered, incarcerated and older women. In addition, the Commission collaborates with the Department of Social Services to identify emergency beds designated for women who are homeless due to domestic violence.

Incarceration

Come Into the Sun Coalition and Conferences

Concerned about the increasing number of San Francisco women and girls becoming involved with the criminal justice system, the Commission and the Delinquency Prevention Center co-sponsored a conference to address their needs. The first of these *Come Into the Sun* conferences, in May 1991, identified specific needs. It focused on prisoners as parents, access to community resources for youth at risk of becoming involved in the justice system, post-release women and girls who are returning to the community, health care services while detained or incarcerated, and alternatives to incarceration.

This conference resulted in the formation of the *Come Into the Sun Coalition*, an ongoing collaborative between the Commission and 40 public, private, and non-profit service providers. The coalition works to reduce the number of women and girls using the justice system and to call attention to the disparity in services available for females in a system driven by the needs of a predominantly male population.

The coalition is particularly interested in issues concerning girls. It convened a study in 1992 to paint a portrait of the experience of girls in the system and to identify gaps in current planning. The second *Come Into the Sun* conference focused exclusively on girls, specifically the lack of services outside the justice system that focus on girls, the lack of out-of-home placement facilities for young women, violence, and the lack of appropriate staff trained to address the unique problems that girls face.

This year, the Commission plans to formalize the structure of the *Come Into the Sun Coalition* and is working toward attaining 501(c)3 non-profit status for the group. The Commission also plans to continue its participation in the Mentorship Program and Street Survival Project, two successful programs for young women designed by the coalition. In Fall 1994, CITSC is planning three further conferences on post-sentencing alternatives, health and housing issues.

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Health

In 1994, one of the Commission's most intensive work efforts is its participation in a project with the Women's Health Advisory Committee to the San Francisco Department of Public Health. With a goal of developing a model women's health care delivery system, nearly 250 women met in 19 focus groups to voice their needs and dreams for health care. Targeted groups included women of different ethnicities, sexual orientations, ages and physical abilities.

The project, with its final report and model, has been a tremendous success. The San Francisco Health Commission had adopted several of its recommendations, and the Department of Public Health has committed staff resources to working with the Women's Health Advisory Committee in the future. The focus now turns to implementing the report's recommendations regarding access, provider training and diversity, and quality of care.

San Francisco can be proud to be on the leading edge of health care reform. Beyond the impact on the local health care delivery system, the project has received attention at the state, national and international levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission on the Status of Women strongly recommends that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors support the Commission in its efforts to seek charter amendment status on the November 1994 ballot.

The Commission's effectiveness over the past five years was enhanced by the power and authority it was granted through the Administrative Code. Unfortunately, because of social, economic and political factors that are out of its control, the Commission continuously finds itself exerting its efforts toward mere survival, stealing much needed time, energy and human resources away from its goal of serving the women and girls of San Francisco.

What will charter status give the Commission? First and foremost, it will provide a mandate from the people of San Francisco, showing through their voting power that they value the Commission. It also will provide a permanency factor, demonstrating to the women of San Francisco that their city recognizes the value of having a special agency devoted to their needs. Charter status will offer some relief from having to continuously prove its worthiness, eliminating the wasted energy that the Commission spends dealing with the never-ending threat of elimination or reduction.

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This is an ideal time for the Commission to pursue obtaining charter status. It has the backing of the Human Rights Commission, (most) Supervisors, and *many* others, illustrated by the outpouring of support at the April 13 public hearing and the many letters written advocating on its behalf. Pollster David Binder has indicated to the Commission that voters are interested in women's issues and that a high turn out of liberal and women voters is expected in the November 1994 election. Also, the Controller's office has stated that charter status will *not* likely increase the city's budget. Finally, accomplishments for women that are just starting to take effect would be meaningless if the panel's power were to be reduced now. Without the Commission, women and children would lose the only agency solely devoted to their issues.

The Commission's staff and commissioners are extraordinarily dedicated to the women of San Francisco. In fact, staff has enforced its own internal policy that NO money be taken from domestic violence services under any circumstances, so in the midst of severe budget cuts, some employees (of which there are only four full time) have voluntarily taken cuts in hours or pay, while increasing their workloads. Staff has devised other creative measures for saving money. For example, picking up mail every day at City Hall rather than paying to have it delivered; designing and printing letterhead rather than contracting for the service; handling bulk copy and production needs; soliciting private corporations to print educational materials; utilizing the services of volunteers and interns on a regular basis; and working to develop the Commission's Friends' Committee.

In these times of dwindling resources and increasing demands, the Commission fears that loss of independence would ultimately translate into less funding. The fact that the Commission was abolished in 1980 through a gesture by the Board of Supervisors is a reminder that it continues to be vulnerable to elimination by the vote of a minority of elected officials. Reducing funds would result in minimal savings to the city, as the Commission's operating budget of \$316,000 is "decimal dust" in San Francisco's \$2.3 billion budget. However, if the city ever was compelled to reduce or eliminate the Commission, charter status would not necessarily be an impediment; the Mayor would continue to have the power of the line-item veto.

There are three options for consideration regarding the future status of the Commission. The first, to dissolve it as an independent agency and make it a division of the Human Rights Commission, is clearly a step backwards and does not have the best interest of San Francisco women and children at heart. It would definitely result in budget cuts and leave the Commission on the Status of Women to languish as it did in the past, as a small department with no power or authority. The second option, to continue operations under the authority of the Administrative Code, continues to leave the Commission vulnerable to abolishment by just six votes of the Board of Supervisors.

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The Commission is committed to proceeding with the final option, which is to seek charter status through the ballot process. To this end, the Commission on the Status of Women recommends that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors support the Commission in its pursuit of equality within the San Francisco governmental structure by championing its efforts to obtain charter status on the November 1994 ballot.

CONCLUSION

The Commission on the Status of Women strongly believes that it must maintain separate, independent status in order to be effective in fulfilling its charges and to be responsible to the people that it serves. Functioning in this manner over the past five years, the Commission has not only remained true to its mission, it has expanded its responsibilities, and has operated successfully with minimal staff (only four full time employees) on a regularly decreasing lilliputian budget, in the face of ever increasing demands on its precious few human and financial resources.

The women and girls of our city need and deserve an active Commission, one that is strong, independent, fully funded and *permanent*. It is up to the voters of San Francisco to grant charter status to the Commission. The support of the Mayor and Board of Supervisors will facilitate the process.

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City & County of San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

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R E S O L U T I O N

SUSTAINING COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AS A SEPARATE CITY DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, a task force was convened to study options for the administrative structure for an entity charged with protection of women's rights in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, the task force through a three month study concluded that the inequities which supported creation of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1975 have not been remedied and findings documented the need for a continued effort to achieve true equality; and

WHEREAS, through legislation from the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors following the recommendations of the task force; and

WHEREAS, according to Ordinance 271-89, Section 33.8 REPORTS, (b) Report regarding Consolidation of Commissions, passed by the Board of Supervisors and signed by the Mayor in July, 1989, that on or before June 1, 1994, the Commission and the Human Rights Commission shall submit recommendations, jointly or separately, to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors concerning the feasibility of consolidating the functions of the Commission and the Human Rights Commission; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 271-89, amended the San Francisco Administrative Code to enhance the Commission on the Status of Women's powers and duties and to terminate supervision of Commission on the Status of Women by the Human Rights Commission; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Commission is to advance women's equality in San Francisco and to assist the City and County of San Francisco in realizing its policy to ensure women equal economic, political, social and educational opportunities as well as equal services by public agencies; and

WHEREAS, the focus of the Commission has been to advance women's equality by focusing on issues of violence towards women; sexual harassment; gender-based workplace discrimination; incarcerated women; job opportunities and training; safe affordable housing; quality health services; and local, state, and federal legislation; and

WHEREAS, findings confirm that domestic violence is the leading cause of death for women in San Francisco and 29% of the homeless population is due to domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, findings confirm that there is a lack of safe affordable permanent housing for several "at risk" populations of women and children, and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of San Francisco requested that the Commission establish a Code of Conduct for city departments to have an effective administrative process to protect complainants of their rights, privacy and integrity; and the problem of sexual harassment and job discrimination has long been under estimated; and

WHEREAS, findings confirm that the number of incarcerated women is increasing while services, programs and alternatives available to incarcerated females are not increasing; and

WHEREAS, findings confirm a gender difference in health care and that women live longer than men and they have poorer health outcomes and greater disability from illness; and

WHEREAS, women are still denied by virtue of their status as women, basic rights resulting in inequities in economic, political, legal and social status; and

WHEREAS, the Commission advises the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and city departments on matters affecting women; promotes, educates and advocates for the rights of women and girls; resolves and mediates discrimination complaints, provides training to city departments, provides technical and employment assistance, information and referrals; administers funds to domestic violence agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is preparing an Executive Summary to be submitted to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors by March, 1994, followed by a Report to be submitted in June 1994, verifying that women remain in an inferior status;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Status of Women at its regular meeting of January 27, 1994, formally proposes that the Commission remain as a separate city department; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Status of Women recommends that the Commission be considered to be made a Charter Commission; and

STILL FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors that it is valuable and necessary that the Commission on the Status of Women remain as a separate city department.



Edwin M. Lee
Director

R E S O L U T I O N

Recommending
For the Continuation of the Human Rights Commission
and the Commission on the Status of Women
as Separate Departments

WHEREAS, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and the Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) are required by law (Sec. 33.8 of the San Francisco Administrative Code) to submit recommendations, jointly or separately, to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on or before June 1, 1994, concerning the feasibility of consolidating the functions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Commission; and

WHEREAS, testimony presented to the Board of Supervisors in 1989 documented a continued need for a governmental body to monitor the status of women, including the status and unique problems of women of color, homeless women, and low-income women, both within City and County government and in the private sector; to monitor complaints about unlawful and unequal treatment of women; to investigate inequalities; and to propose remedies; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 271-89, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 24, 1989, and signed by the Mayor on July 28, 1989, amended the San Francisco Administrative Code to enhance the Commission on the Status of Women's powers and duties and to establish an Executive Director position for the COSW to act as its department head and appointing officer; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Human Rights Commission, at its regular meeting of March 24, 1994, formally endorses the continued separation of the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women as independent commissions and departments; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Human Rights Commission recommends to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors that it is valuable and necessary that the Commission on the Status of Women remain as a separate, independent City departments.



City & County of San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

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R E S O L U T I O N

ENDORISING WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

WHEREAS, the Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) was created in 1975, to advance women's equality in San Francisco and to assist the City and County in realizing its policy to ensure women equal economic, political, social, and educational opportunities as well as equal services by public agencies, and where COSW had its powers and duties enhanced through Ordinance 271-89 in July 1989; and,

WHEREAS, COSW since its restructuring in 1989 has been keenly aware of women's health care; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission on the Status of Women had as one of its standing committees, a Health Committee; and,

WHEREAS, when the Women's Health Advisory Committee (WHAC) was officially created by the San Francisco Health Commission, the COSW was invited to join this advisory committee; and,

WHEREAS, WHAC is committed through its Mission Statement to advocate for a health care system that will serve the specific needs of women of all races, colors, ethnicities, creeds, religions, ages, physical abilities, national origins, sexual orientations and family groupings; and

WHEREAS, WHAC has formally presented the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the San Francisco Health Commission with a report of its findings entitled: Restructuring Health Care Delivery: "Women-Centered Health Services," and there this report advocates several policy recommendations; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Status of Women supports the Women's Health Advisory Committee's report; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Status of Women commends the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the San Francisco Health Commission in its support to study the WHAC proposed model for the purpose of increasing the sensitivity of the Department's services to adequately address women and girls' health needs.

**LETTERS WRITTEN IN SUPPORT OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

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Deborah J. Riggins
Carol J. Shellenberger
Senator Milton Marks
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Dorothy Satir
Brian Cahill
Jennifer Grant
Alice E. Trepp
Rebecca Rolfe

(Letters of support are kept on file at the Commission on the Status of Women.)

**VOLUNTEERS WHO PROVIDED SUPPORT
AT PUBLIC HEARING, APRIL 13, 1994**

Kara Connors
Caroline Connors
Krishanti Dharmaraj
Raelynn Acosta
Victor M. Marquez, Esq.

APPENDIX D

**APPEARANCES IN SUPPORT OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 13, 1994**

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Elyse Duckett
Lotus Yee Fong
Patricia Fisher
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(Testimony provided at the Public Hearing was audio recorded and is kept on file at the Commission on the Status of Women.)

APPENDIX D



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